

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method to automatically activate a reserve resource, comprising:
monitoring a load on a number of active resources;
comparing said load to a threshold specified in a resource usage policy;
and
5 automatically activating said reserve resource when dictated by said
resource usage policy.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising updating said resource usage
policy after said reserve resource is activated.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising balancing said load among
said number of active resources and said activated reserve resource.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - a) monitoring a combined load on said number of active resources and
said activated reserve resource;
 - b) comparing said combined load to a second threshold specified in a
5 second resource usage policy;
 - c) deactivating a resource selected from said number of active
resources and said activated reserve resource when dictated by said second
resource usage policy; and
 - d) indicating that said selected resource is deactivated.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising signaling an event manager
based on said monitored load as dictated by said resource usage policy.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said resource usage policy dictates
activating said reserve resource when said monitored load exceeds said
threshold for a predetermined occurrence.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said resource usage policy dictates activating said reserve resource when said monitored load exceeds said threshold for a period of time.
 8. The method of claim 1, wherein said resource usage policy triggers a number of alarms when said threshold is met, and wherein said resource usage policy dictates activating said reserve resource when a response to said number of alarms is not received.
 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising updating a configuration profile to include said activated reserve resource, said update being made in response to said indication that said reserve resource is activated.
 10. The method of claim 1 further comprising charging a user of said activated reserve resource a fee, said charge being made in response to said indication that said reserve resource is activated.
 11. An apparatus for automatically activating a reserve resource, comprising:
 - at least one computer readable storage media;
 - a resource usage policy stored on said at least one computer readable storage media; and
- 5 computer readable program code stored on said at least one computer readable storage media, said computer readable program code comprising:
- a) program code for monitoring a load on a number of active resources;
 - b) program code for comparing said monitored load to a
 - 10 threshold specified in said resource usage policy;
 - c) program code for activating said reserve resource when dictated by said resource usage policy.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising program code for indicating that said reserve resource has been activated.
13. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising program code for selecting a reserve resource to activate based on a hierarchical resource deployment scheme.
14. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising program code for signaling an event manager based on said monitored load when dictated by said resource usage policy.
15. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising program code for selecting said reserve resource from a pool of reserve resources.
16. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:
 - a) program code for monitoring a combined load on said number of active resources and said activated reserve resource;
 - b) program code for comparing said combined load to a second threshold specified in a second resource usage policy;
 - c) program code for deactivating a resource selected from said number of active resources and said activated reserve resource when dictated by said second resource usage policy; and
 - d) program code for indicating that said selected resource is deactivated.
17. The apparatus of claim 16, further comprising program code for returning said deactivated reserve resource to a pool of reserve resources.
18. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:
 - a configuration profile stored on said at least one computer readable storage medium; and

19. An apparatus for automatically activating a reserve resource, comprising:
 - means for monitoring a load on a number of active resources;
 - means for comparing said monitored load to a threshold specified in a resource usage policy;

20. The apparatus of claim 19, further comprising means for tracking the availability of said number of active resources and said reserve resource.

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